(e) if not, the reasons for harassing practitioners of Acupressure and Acupuncture by police in several parts of the country specially in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) According to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Acupressure and Acupuncture have been recognized as Alternative Medical Therapy by the Western World. WHO does not play any role in recognizing a System of Therapy.

(c) to (e) The Standing Committee of Experts set up by the Government has *inter alia* recommended that certain practices such as Acupuncture and Hypnotherapy which qualified as modes of therapy, could be allowed to be practiced by registered practitioners or appropriately trained personnel. These can be conducted as certificate courses for Registered Medical Practitioners to adopt these mode of therapy in their practice whether Modern or Indian System of Medicine and Homoeopathy.

Contaminated food items

1321. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the studies conducted by organisations like the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research), ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research), and NGOs like the CERC (Consumer Education Research Centre), the CSE (Centre for Science and Environment) have shown that artificial colours, pesticides and insecticides are increasing in our every day foods;

(b) whether it is a fact that a recent ICMR report showed that 51 per cent of foods in the country were contaminated with pesticides of which 20 per cent had levels exceeding the Maximum Tolerance Limit (MTL); and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) Different institutions in the country conduct studies on harmful effects of pesticides and chemicals. However

comparative figures are not available in the studies indicating that artificials colours, pesticides and insecticides are increasing in our every day foods.

The ICMR carried out a multi-centric study on surveillance of food contaminants during 1986-91 and published a report in 1993. The report was however, withdrawn in 1994 due to deficiency in the methodology adopted.

On the basis of the advice of the experts, the permissible limits of food additives and pesticides have been reviewed from time to time. The Ministry of Agriculture has also constituted expert committees to review the health of safety of different pesticides and banned/restricted use of some of the pesticides. Keeping in view the residue of pesticides in different components including foods items, the Government of India is advocating Integrated Pest Management (IPM) which *inter alia* includes the cultural, mechanical biological and need based judicious use of pesticides, use of bio-pesticides banning/phasing out the most persistent organochlorine group of pesticides, educating the farmers on judicious use of pesticides and observance of waiting period, encouraging organic farming etc.

Food adulteration

1322. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that despite a series of regulatory rules, adulteration in food has assumed a high degree of sophastication; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to arrest this trend?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) As per information made available by the Food (Health) Authorities of the States/Union Territories who are responsible for the implementation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act and Rules made thereunder in the country, the overall percentage of adulteration detected during the years 1998, 1999 and 2000 are 8.11, 9.21 and 10.73 respectively.